BREATH OF FLOWERS

TOKYOPOP

2

Story and Art by CALY

THE BALL!
OVER HERE!
BOUNCE
BOUNCE
SCREECH
LOOK AT YOUR FRIEND!
HUH?
HUFF
HEE HEE
CLICK

Chapter 10
Distance

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SHEESH... ANOTHER POST FROM JUDITH!

ON TWEETER AND CHITCHAT...

BESIDES OGLING GWYN AND STRUTTING AROUND IN THE LAP OF LUXURY, WHAT THE HELL IS SHE DOING OVER THERE? ALL SHE DOES IS POST THINGS...

TO DRIVE ME CRAZY!

GRRRRR...

NO, I REALLY PREFER WATCHING YOU— I MEAN, WATCHING THE *TEAM* PLAY...

AREN'T YOU BORED?

NAH. NOT AT ALL!

CHACK

HEY, JUDY! YOU DON'T WANT TO JOIN US FOR PRACTICE?

HERE!

SHOOSH

SLAP

SLAP

HEE

HEE

SIGH

TAP

TAP

TAP

OKAY, I'M GOING BACK IN.

COOL!

OUR LOVE WON'T SURVIVE BEING SO FAR APART, STEVEN!

BUT I HAVE TO GO, BARBARA! CLIMBING MT. EVEREST HAS ALWAYS BEEN MY GREATEST DREAM!

I KNOW, STEVEN! COMPARED TO THE GRANDEUR OF THE MOUNTAINS, OUR LOVE SEEMS SO TINY...!

HUH?!

RADIO SILENCE FOR TWO DAYS... WE TALKED TWO OR THREE TIMES WHEN SHE FIRST GOT THERE, AND THEN NOTHING!

IT'S THE EXACT OPPOSITE!

HEY! HOW WAS PRACTICE THIS MORNING?

I HOPE EVERYTHING'S GOING WELL! I MISS YOU!♥

ARE YOU DOING OKAY? HOW IS PRACTICE GOING? I MISS YOU...

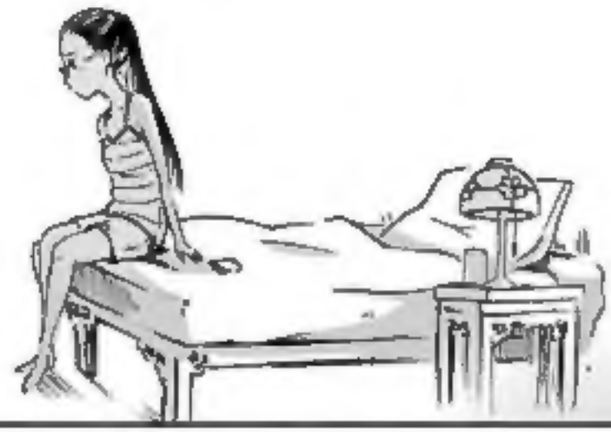
WHEREAS WITH GWYN...

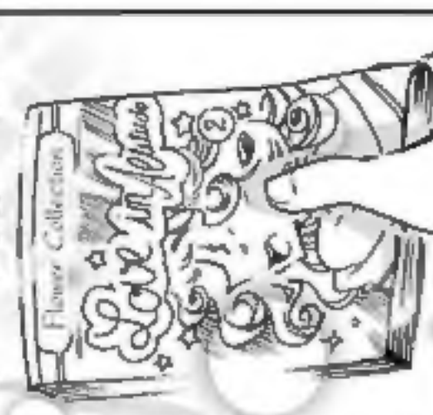
"ARE YOU DOING OKAY? HOW IS PRACTICE GOING? I MISS YOU..."

...

TAP

TAP





GRAB

THAT'S IT! I NEED A NEW PERSPECTIVE...

READY TO GO?

O-OH!

OKAY!

TWIP

HER FACE WAS TOO CLOSE!

AH!

OH!

I'M ALL DONE CHANGING.

EARTH TO JUDITH!

YOU'RE COMING?

HEE!

AREN'T YOU?

AH...

THE GIRLS WANTED TO GO TRY OUT THE POOL TO RELAX...

GO...P

GO WHERE?

GREAT...

YES, OF COURSE I'M COMING!

GRRAAAAH!!

THAT DIDN'T CHANGE MY PERSPECTIVE AT ALL!

BZZZ! BZZZ!

IF THEIR LOVE CAN'T STAND UP AGAINST A STUPID MOUNTAIN, THEN HOW CAN OUR LOVE... COMPETE WITH THE ATLANTIC OCEAN?!

FLAP

WHAT THE HECK IS THIS MANGA?!

YOU...!

GRAB

GRRRRR

HAH HAH

HEE HEE

JUDITH?

STOP SPAMMING MY NEWSFEED AND FIND SOMETHING TO DO BESIDES OGLING MY GIRLFRIEND!!

TAP TAP TAP TAP TAP TAP

I'M NOT SURE I'M GOING IN...

OH...

AIIEEE!

WHOOSH!

SWIM?

...WOOF...

WAAAH!

KER-SPLASH

WHOA... IT'S HUGE. IT'S LIKE WE'RE IN A SWIMMING POOL AT A PALACE!

...

JUDITH!, COME ON IN! THE WATER'S PERFECT!

FLASH

SPLASH!!

WE'RE GOING TO THE HOT TUB FIRST! SEE YOU LATER.

OKAY!

AND TO SEE YOU SMILE...

FOR YOUR BIRTHDAY...

I FIGURED IT WOULD MAKE YOU HAPPY.

I WANTED TO BE WITH YOU...

TELL HER!

IT'S...

IT'S BECAUSE...

TELL HER...

HUH...

JUDITH, DON'T TELL ME YOU CAN'T SWIM?

KOFF KOFF

KOFF

KOFF

AND IF THERE AREN'T ANY WAVES...

UH...

WHEN MY FEET TOUCH...

WELL...

Y-YOU JUST SURPRISED ME! OF COURSE I CAN SWIM!

SO, FOR YOUR BIRTHDAY WE'LL GO SOMEPLACE YOU WANT TO GO!

OKAY?

OKAY...

WHY DID YOU WANT TO COME TO A SPORTS CAMP?

WE COULD HAVE GONE SOMEPLACE ELSE, A PLACE THAT— HAD ACTIVITIES FOR YOU TOO.

IF YOU DON'T LIKE PLAYING BASKETBALL OR SWIMMING...

BUT JUDITH...

RRRING

PLEASE PICK UP...

RRRING...

CRAP!!

OH, NO... THIS IS BAD...

IS THERE A PROBLEM?

UH... I LEFT MY PHONE ON AIRPLANE MODE.

AND I JUST SAW THAT I HAVE A TON OF TEXTS AND MISSED CALLS FROM AZAMI...

DINNER WILL BE SERVED AT 7:30.

AZAMI! IT'S ME!

!!

HELLO?

WAIT...

AAAAAHHHH! SORRY!! I COMPLETELY FORGOT ABOUT THE TIME DIFFERENCE!

IT'S LIKE ONE IN THE MORNING THERE, RIGHT?

?!

?

WHAT TIME IS IT?

RRRING

RRRING...

ALL RIGHT.

I'M GOING TO CALL HER RIGHT AWAY! SEE YOU AT DINNER!

OH...
GREAT!
YOU KNOW,
I HAD MY
PHONE ON
AIRPLANE
MODE!

OH!
THAT'S WHY

THAT'S
WHY I
DIDN'T
GET YOUR
MESSAGES
UNTIL JUST
NOW...

I WANTED
SO BADLY
TO CALL YOU
BACK QUICKLY
THAT I DIDN'T
REALIZE...

I'M
UP NOW
ANYWAY,
SO WE CAN
TALK...

GWYN,
IT'S
OKAY...

YESSS!
I HAVE SO
MUCH TO
TELL YOU!

SO...

SO,
EVERYTHING'S
GOOD? TELL
ME ALL
ABOUT IT!

THIS
AFTERNOON
WE ALL WENT TO
THE POOL WITH
JUDITH! IT WAS
GIGANTIC! JUDITH
DIDN'T WANT TO GO IN,
SO I HAD TO CONVINCE
HER - BY PUSHING
HER IN! SHE DOESN'T
REALLY KNOW HOW TO
SWIM, SO I TOLD HER
THAT I'D TEACH HER
DURING THE
TRIP.

AND WHAT
ABOUT ME IN
ALL THIS?

ALWAYS
JUDITH...

THAT'S NO
EXCUSE!

YOU
DIDN'T HAVE
ONE SECOND
TO THINK
ABOUT ME?

AIRPLANE
MODE...

OF... OF
COURSE I
THINK ABOUT
YOU, ALL
THE TIME...

HUH?

THEN WHY
DIDN'T YOU
THINK TO CHECK
IF I SENT YOU
ANY MESSAGES...
IN THE LAST
TWO DAYS?!

SHE HUNG UP...

CLICK.

IF YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT THIS AGAIN, LET'S [redacted] IT WHEN YOU'VE CALMED DOWN.

I'M SORRY I WOKE YOU UP IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT.. I'LL LET YOU GO.

THAT'S ENOUGH AZAMI, I GET IT..

AZAMI! WHAT ARE YOU IMPLYING?

YOU KNEW THAT I WAS GOING TO BE REALLY BUSY OVER HERE WITH ALL THE ACTIVITIES.

AND THAT I WASN'T GOING TO SPEND ALL MY TIME ON THE PHONE!

GWYN.. I REALLY MISS YOU, BUT I FEEL LIKE YOU DON'T MISS ME!

I TOLD YOU.. WITH THE TIME CHANGE AND ALL THE CAMP-

TOKYO DEFINITELY BE TOO BUSY TO THINK ABOUT [redacted] HERE NOW!

AND WHEN YOU GO TO THIS NEW SCHOOL, IS IT GOING TO BE THE SAME?!

OH..

THAT

REALLY HURT

GWYN! PLEASE, WAIT! I HAVE TO TELL YOU SOMETHING.

THAT'S ENOUGH!

I CAN'T LET HER HURT GWYN!

I WON'T STAND FOR IT!

GWYN!

AH!

TURN

CLICK CLICK

THANKS FOR WAITING FOR ME.

BUT I'M NOT REALLY HUNGRY I'M GOING TO BED.

I HAVE TO LET GWYN KNOW...

HOW I REALLY FEEL ABOUT HER!

TO MESS HER UP LIKE THAT?!

OR WAS GWYN... CRYING?

WHAT DID THAT IDIOT AZAMI JUST SAY TO HER...

IS IT MY IMAGINATION?

HUHH? WAIT?

Chapter 11
Declaration of love

DID I JUST SAY TO GWYN?

WHAT..

HEY

WHAT THE HELL IS WRONG WITH ME?! I COULDN'T JUST ENJOY FINALLY GETTING TO TALK TO HER ON THE PHONE?!

AND I EVEN HUNG UP ON HER!

WHEN WE'RE AN OLD MARRIED COUPLE, THEN MAYBE THINGS WILL CALM DOWN A BIT...

SIGH

JUST A CUTE LITTLE TEXT OR EVEN A HEART EMOJI!

IT'S NOT LIKE I ASKED HER TO SPEND THREE HOURS ON THE PHONE WITH ME DAILY...

ON THE OTHER HAND...

BUT RIGHT NOW WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE TOTALLY PASSIONATE ABOUT EACH OTHER!!

ROMANCE. SWEET LITTLE MESSAGES

THE CRAZY EMOTIONAL WHIRLWIND OF A NEW RELATION-SHIP!

WE'RE NOT AN OLD MARRIED COUPLE YET!

I MEAN...

SHE'S THE ONE WHO PROMISED TO WRITE EVERY DAY!

UMM. YEAH.

YOU'VE SEEN HOW BUSY WE ARE HERE! BETWEEN THE PRACTICES, THE TRIPS, THE LECTURES...

I CAN'T STAY GLUED TO MY CELL PHONE ALL THE TIME, BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN I'M NOT THINKING ABOUT HER!

I'M NOT GOING TO STOP LOVING HER JUST BECAUSE WE DIDN'T TALK FOR A FEW DAYS!

WHAT IS SHE THINKING?

YOUR LEMON-LIME SORBET

AH! THANKS!

THAT'S JUST CRAZY!

SHE BASICALLY ACCUSED ME OF INTENTIONALLY NOT CALLING HER!

CHOMP

MMPPREH...

JUST TWO OR THREE DAYS!

NOTHING TO GET ALL WORKED UP ABOUT!

IT'S JUST A FREAKIN' MESSAGE!

SHE ACCUSED ME OF NOT THINKING ABOUT HER ENOUGH, AND THEN SHE HUNG UP ON ME!

SINCE YOU WANTED TO KNOW EVERYTHING, LET'S TALK! I JUST HAD AZAMI ON THE PHONE AND IT DIDN'T GO WELL.

TO MAKE HER UNDERSTAND HOW I FEEL...

I CAN'T FIND AN OPENING..

JUDY?

WHEN I ASKED IF I COULD SPEAK WITH HER, I WASN'T THINKING WE'D HAVE THAT KIND OF SERIOUS CONVERSATION...

WHAT DO YOU THINK, JUDY?

"GWYN! I NEED TO TALK TO YOU.."

OKAY

SOMETIMES I THINK...

I DON'T UNDERSTAND HER AT ALL...

YEAH, YEAH, OF COURSE I'M LISTENING! WHAT WERE YOU SAYING?

ARE YOU LISTENING TO ME?

HMM..

SORRY

I'M GOING TO HAVE TO STEP IT UP...

IF I CAN ONLY MAKE HER REALIZE THE SITUATION SHE'S IN WITH ME...

GWYN!

BANG

CLANG

CRAP. THAT MAKES IT LOOK LIKE I'M TAKING AZAMI'S SIDE...

BUT MAYBE THIS CAN BE MY OPENING TO—

JUST PUT YOURSELF IN HER SHOES FOR A MINUTE.

PRETEND THAT AZAMI WENT TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD WITH SOMEONE ELSE..

..

..OR NOT! HOW CAN SOMEONE BE THIS CLUELESS?!

WHETHER YOU GO ALONE OR WITH SOMEONE, IT'S ALL THE SAME! YOU'RE ALWAYS WITH LOTS OF OTHER PEOPLE AT A CAMP!!

YOU'RE FAR AWAY FROM HER..

IN A BEAUTIFUL PLACE WITH SOMEONE ELSE...

SOMEONE WHO IS VERY CLOSE TO YOU.

AND WHO MIGHT BE FEELING A LITTLE MORE THAN JUST FRIENDSHIP.

WHA..

WHAT IS IT?

SO, YOU SEE. THAT *CAN'T* BE WHY SHE'S UPSET!

SHE'S A MILLION MILES AWAY FROM GETTING MY HINTS!!

BUT IT'S NOT LIKE I CAME HERE WITH JUST ANYBODY!

YOU MEAN THAT SHE'S... WORRIED BECAUSE I'M WITH ANOTHER GIRL?

YOU WOULDN'T BE WORRIED, EVEN FOR A SECOND?

IF AZAMI REALLY WENT OFF WITH ANOTHER GIRL?

AND YOU, GWYN?

GLAAASH

AND AZAMI KNOWS VERY WELL THAT YOU'RE JUST A REALLY GREAT FRIEND!

I CAME WITH YOU, JUDY!

YOU EVEN HELPED GET US BACK TOGETHER WHEN THINGS COOLED OFF!

FRIENDZONED

WE'LL DISCUSS IT CALMLY.

THIS ISN'T GOING TO RUIN EVERYTHING!

I HAVE TO HOPE THAT

AND WORK IT OUT TOGETHER!

IT'S NOT LIKE SHE'S GOING TO BE INTERESTED IN EVERY GIRL THAT WALKS BY

AZAMI OVERCAME HER PREJUDICES FOR ME, BUT...

WE'LL BUILD A SOLID RELATIONSHIP DESPITE THE UPS AND DOWNS

EVEN IF WE HAVE MISUNDER-STANDINGS.

UNTIL I HAVE PROOF TO THE CONTRARY...

SHE STILL LOVES ME...

THANK YOU, JUDITH! YOU REALLY HELPED ME OUT!

YOU'RE THE BEST!

THAT'S WHAT I NEED TO SAY TO AZAMI!

THAT'S IT!

I'M TRYING TO TAKE FULL ADVANTAGE OF THE TIME WE HAVE HERE

BECAUSE IT'S A ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME OPPORTUNITY!

AS FOR AZAMI...

I'LL DO EVERYTHING I CAN TO KEEP HER IN MY LIFE FOR AS LONG AS POSSIBLE

YOUR STOMACH'S RIGHT. WE DIDN'T EAT AND THAT SORBET JUST MADE ME HUNGRIER...

OH!

GROWL

SORRY! BECAUSE OF ME, YOU DIDN'T EAT EITHER!

NO PROBLEM, WE CAN JUST GO NOW.

YOU THINK THEY ARE STILL SERVING FOOD AT THIS HOUR?

OH!

WE'LL HAVE PLENTY OF TIME TOGETHER!

AFTER ALL THAT EVEN IF AZAMI WASN'T IN THE PICTURE

GWYN WOULDN'T HAVE NOTICED ME AT ALL

I LEFT THE WINDOW OPEN..

MM. SEE YOU IN THE MORNING!

GOOD NIGHT, JUDITH! SWEET DREAMS!

SNIFF

AH...

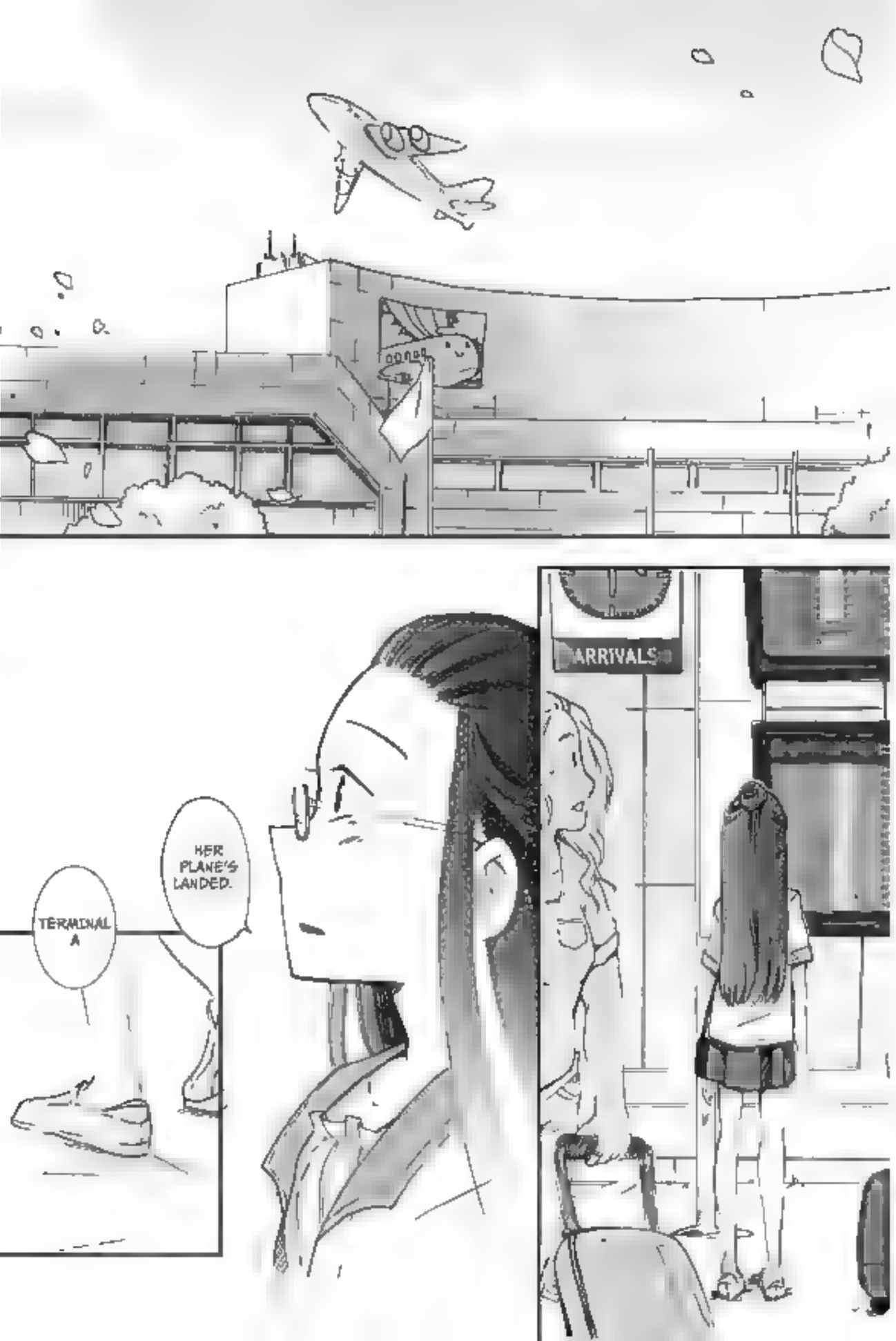
SNIFF

CLICK

IN HER EYES, I'M JUST ONE GRAIN OF SAND ON THE BEACH...

WHOOSH

Chapter 12
Before the End of the Summer


ARRIVALS
TERMINAL A
HER PLANE'S LANDED.

JUDITH

HM?

UGH.

WHAT THE...?!

THE MONTH OF AUGUST IS ENDING...

PRETTY SOON WE'LL BE GOING BACK TO SCHOOL, BUT AS FOR TODAY .. GWYN IS FINALLY RETURNING FROM CANADA!

AH!

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING HERE?!

AND YOUR HAIR...?

IF IT WON'T BOTHER YOU TOO MUCH.

WE COULD JUST SIT DOWN AND TALK...

AZAMIIII! IT'S SO GREAT TO SEE YOU!

HHHH...

SAIL...

WHY ARE YOU SITTING SO FAR AWAY? WHY DON'T WE JUST CHAT WHILE WE WAIT?

AND THEN WHAT?

YOU KNOW WHAT? I DON'T LIKE YOU EITHER!

I KNOW YOU DON'T LIKE ME...

SO...

YOU CAME TO MEET GWYN TOO, RIGHT?

THERE'S NO POINT IN PRETEND-ING..

WHEN GWYN'S NOT AROUND.

GRRRR!

YOU SEE, WHEN YOU GIVE IT A LITTLE THOUGHT, I DON'T EVEN NEED TO ANSWER YOU!

PINE...

JUDITH, WHY DID YOU CUT YOUR—

GO AHEAD ASK ME! YOU'LL LIKE THE ANSWER!

BECAUSE GWYN REJECTED ME!

WHAT THE—?! YOU TOLD HER YOU LOVE HER?! YOU SAID YOU WOULDN'T MAKE A MOVE AS LONG AS SHE WAS WITH ME! YOU TRAITOR!

CALM DOWN.. I DIDN'T EVEN NEED TO...

HUMPH...

APPARENTLY, HER FLIGHT'S GOING TO BE 15 MINUTES LATE..

OF COURSE, BUT THERE'S ANOTHER REASON!

BECAUSE YOU WENT TO THE HAIR-DRESSER!

...?

YOU AREN'T GOING TO ASK ME WHY I CUT MY HAIR?

SO, TO MOVE ON, I THOUGHT A LITTLE CHANGE WOULDN'T HURT...

I DON'T WANT TO WAIT FOR SOMETHING THAT'S NEVER GOING ANYWHERE...

TRUE...

YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENED? GWYN IS TOO DITZY TO FIGURE THESE THINGS OUT FOR HERSELF...

HUH?

IT'S BETTER THAN THE BRAIDS.

LET'S JUST SAY THAT WHILE WE WERE HAVING A CHAT.

SHE MADE IT VERY CLEAR THAT I'M JUST A GOOD FRIEND. NOTHING MORE

AND UNLIKE OTHERS, I DON'T ENJOY WATCHING PEOPLE SUFFER!

NOT AT ALL! I WAS BEING SINCERE! YOUR FAKE DREADLOCKS WERE AWFUL!

WHAT?!

HA HA HA

ARE YOU BEING NICE NOW BECAUSE I'M OUT OF THE RUNNING?

OOHH - WAS THAT A COMPLIMENT?

THAT'S IT, ISN'T IT, AZAMI?

POC

POC

WHAT DID YOU THINK WOULD HAPPEN AFTER WHAT YOU SAID TO HER?

WHAAT? I MADE GWYN CRY?!

I... IT'S JUST THAT THE NEXT TIME WE SPOKE..

SHE SEEMED TO BE DOING JUST FINE. WE TALKED A LOT, BUT SHE DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING ABOUT.

WHEN THE SPORTS CAMP HAD JUST STARTED...

WHEN SHE CALLED YOU AND YOU ACCUSED HER OF NOT PAYING ENOUGH ATTENTION TO YOU OR WHATEVER...

WHO DO YOU THINK WAS THERE TO DRY HER

I DON'T "ENJOY" OTHER PEOPLES' SUFFERING! I SHOULD POINT OUT THAT I AGAIN HELPED GWYN!

I HELPED BOTH OF YOU AS A COUPLE IN SPITE OF MY FEELINGS..

WHAT? WHEN WAS THAT?

I'VE ALREADY HEARD THE SPEECH ABOUT YOUR ETERNAL LOVE!

QUIT IT! THAT'S ENOUGH!

BEUUH...

SMACK

OUR STORY IS GOING TO LAST FOR A VERY LONG TIME.. !

I.. I STILL WANT TO BE HER FRIEND.

I DON'T WANT TO BURN ANY BRIDGES

AND YOU STILL CAME TO MEET HER AT THE AIRPORT AFTER ALL THAT?

IT WAS BECAUSE SHE TALKED TO ME ABOUT IT

FROM GWYN!

?

THAT SHE KNEW WHAT SHE HAD TO SAY TO YOU!

HEY, LET'S NOT START THAT AGAIN!

NOW I UNDERSTAND HOW YOU FIGURED OUT THAT YOU DIDN'T HAVE A CHANCE WITH HER..

OOH, THAT'S ROUGH..

OUR RELATION-SHIP!

I TRIED TO APOL-OGIZE..

BUT GWYN TOLD ME THAT SHE UNDERSTOOD THAT IF SOMETIMES I GO TOO FAR, IT'S ONLY BECAUSE I'M PROTECTING WHAT'S MOST PRECIOUS TO ME.

ONE DAY WE MIGHT HAVE ANOTHER MISUNDER-STANDING..

BUT IT'S ESPECIALLY DURING THOSE TIMES THAT WE HAVE TO KEEP AN EYE ON WHAT'S REALLY IMPORTANT

HER PLANE JUST LANDED! LET'S GO!

AAAH!

W-WHAT IS IT?

HMM...

AND..

HEY, WAIT!

I DON'T SEE HER

IT'S FINE, WE STILL HAVE A FEW MINUTES!

YOU ALMOST FORGOT YOUR BAG!

CALM DOWN! I'M JUST JOKING, AZAMI!

PFF!

HMMMM.

HEE HEE

YOU NEVER KNOW!

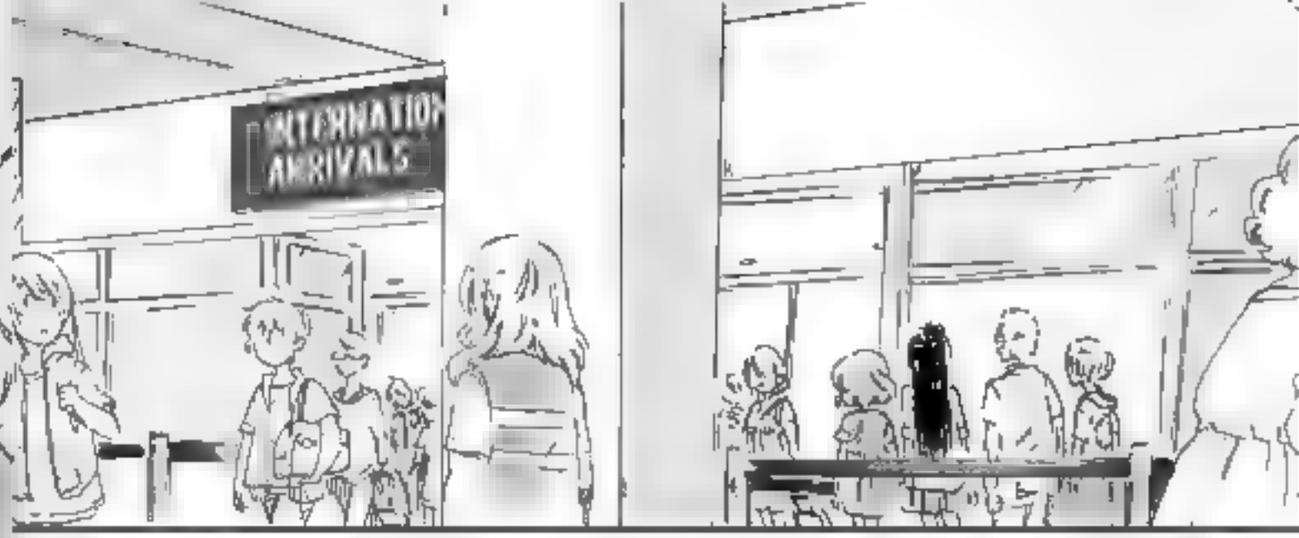
HEY!!

SHE'S RIGHT - SEEING GIVYN AGAIN SO SOON ISN'T GOING TO HELP ME MOVE ON.. BUT..

AT THE SAME TIME, IT'S SO MUCH FUN TO IRRITATE AZAMI! I DIDN'T WANT TO MISS MY CHANCE!

?

?


ARRIVALS

AH!

THANKS...
WELCOME HOME, GWYN..

GWYN!

CLICK
CLICK

RNSH!

YOU CAME TOO!

Y-YES! WELCOME BACK.

IT'S FUNNY JUDITH'S HAIR IS SHORTER THAN YOURS NOW!

WAAAHH! JUDITH!

HEE HEE

OOH!

SCHEE SCHEE

OWWW

WAAAH!! YES, IT'S CRAZY HOW SOFT IT IS! HAHAHAHA!

BA-DUMP BA-DUMP

YOUR HAIR IS SO SOFT! IT LOOKS GREAT LIKE THAT!

GWYN, YOU GREW YOUR HAIR OUT!

AH?

YEAH, IT GROWS TOO FAST..

BUT I DON'T FEEL LIKE CUTTING IT..

IT'S LIKE MAGIC YOU SURE YOU AREN'T RAPUNZEL'S SISTER?

YEAH, SORT OF.. !

SO YOU'VE BECOME FRIENDS WHILE I WAS AWAY?

Chapter 13
New Beginning

I'M WAITING FOR MY FIRST BASKETBALL PRACTICE TO START!

CLICK

CLICK

DING!

♥ IT'S GOING TO BE GREAT!

DING

THANKS. I'M A LITTLE STRESSED BUT I JUST NEED TO GET TO KNOW THE OTHER PLAYERS ON THE TEAM.

DING

YOU'LL TELL ME ALL ABOUT IT THIS EVENING. ARE YOU COMING OVER TO MY PLACE?

YES. I FINISH AT SIX.

DING-DONG-DING

HUH?

I HAVE TO GO! IT'S STARTING ^_^//

CHIN UP! SEE YOU LATER! I'LL BE THINKING ABOUT YOU... LOVE YOU ♥

ME TOO ♥

YOU LOOK SO STUPID WHEN YOU'RE TEXTING GWYN.

SO, HOW'S SHE DOING? IT'S HER FIRST PRACTICE TODAY, ISN'T IT?

YES, BUT IT'S FUN TO BUG YOU, AND THIS WAY I GET ALL THE NEWS ABOUT GWYN.

FINE, AND YES! BUT I'M NOT YOUR SOURCE FOR NEWS ON GWYN! WHY ARE YOU ALWAYS HANGING AROUND ME? DIDN'T YOU HAVE OTHER FRIENDS BESIDES GWYN?

AAAH! IT'S GWYN!!

?!

HEY! FIRST YEARS!

GIRLS...

THAT DIDN'T STOP ME FROM PASSING YOU BY, MY LITTLE FRIEND!

HEY! WHAT'S WITH THE CHEAP CRACK ABOUT MY HEIGHT?! AND IT'S A LIE I GREW HALF AN INCH!

OH, HEY!

GWYN! HEY! DO YOU REMEMBER US?

NOD NOD

WE CAN HEAR YOUR SQUAWKING FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE GYM.

YOU SHOULD SPEND YOUR TIME WARMING UP INSTEAD OF CHATTING!

UM, SORRY.

GASP!

OH, UM. SORRY..

SCARY!!

EXCEPT THAT IN YOUR CASE, TOSHUA, ONLY YOUR HAIR UNDERSTOOD THE CONCEPT OF GROWING OVER THE SUMMER!

HEE HEE

WAAHH! YOU'RE STILL SO BIG! AND I LOVE YOUR HAIR LONG! MINE GREW OUT TOO. I FORGOT TO GET A HAIRCUT BEFORE THE TERM STARTED!

YOU CAN PUT YOUR BAG THERE. I GUESS WE'RE WAITING FOR THE CAPTAIN SO WE CAN START

YES, OF COURSE I REMEMBER...

AND THAT'S VERY COMMENDABLE, BUT DON'T FORGET THAT OTHER PLAYERS ARE HERE TO HAVE FUN!

WHAT THE—! NO?! I'M NOT TOO SERIOUS! I JUST TAKE BASKETBA... SERIOUSLY!

!

GWYN! IT'S THE FIRST PRACTICE OF THE YEAR, NO NEED TO SCARE THE NEW RECRUITS..

GWYN.. YOU'RE TOO SERIOUS!

I WAS JUST TELLING IT LIKE IT IS. IF THEY'RE GOING TO SPEND PRACTICE GOOFING OFF, THEY SHOULD QUIT THE TEAM.

HUH? BUT I..

IT'S—

IT SEEMS LIKE..

WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TWO GWYNS ON THE TEAM...

AND LAST BUT NOT LEAST..

AND FROM A1-B WE HAVE SANDRINE TAUPE!

YOU CAN CALL ME SANDY

MARGARET PAUMIER!

FROM CLASS A1-A, WE HAVE TOSHUA COURTY AND...

HI, EVERY-BODY!

IF YOU DON'T ALREADY KNOW ME, I'M ZOA, THE CAPTAIN OF THE TEAM AND YOUR COACH!

IT'S MY WORK-STUDY JOB.

IT'S SO COOL TO HAVE ZOA BACK

SURE IS!

SERIOUSLY!

WE WANT TO ALSO WELCOME...

A SENIOR..

WHICH IS UNUSUAL..

CLASSE A1 - B
TAUPE SANDRINE

• THIRD YEAR (FINAL)
CLASS T1
TORNE GWYNDOLIN

!

AND THIS YEAR, WE'RE LUCKY TO HAVE A FEW NEW FACES TO REPLACE THE SENIORS WHO LEFT US LAST YEAR!

AND YOU'LL ALWAYS BE THE FIRST GWYN OF THE TEAM!

IF IT DOESN'T BOTHER YOU...

THERE YOU GO.

TRUE, YOUR LAST NAME IS COOL!

WHISPER

NO IDEA.

WHAT ARE THEY PLAYING AT?

HEY, IT'S YOU.

GWYN TORM...

GWYN THUNDER AND GWYN TORM!

EVEN THEIR INITIALS ARE THE SAME!

HELLO, CONFUSION! HAHA!

?

ANOTHER GWYN?!

TORM, RIGHT?

!

IF THERE'S NO MORE DISCUSSION...

LET'S SEE HOW GOOD YOU ALL ARE!

TWEET

IT'S GOING TO A PAIN FOR YOU, THUNDER.

WITH ANOTHER GWYN ON THE TEAM...

I DON'T SEE WHY THAT'S A PROBLEM.

MOST OF THE TIME YOU CALL ME BY MY LAST NAME

SHE'S GREAT! SHE GOT EVEN BETTER OVER THE SUMMER. IT'S CRAZY!

SMOKIN' HOT!

AH, THANKS.

PAT PAT

CLEARLY, WE ARE VERY LUCKY TO HAVE A SUPERSTAR PLAYER!

SHE'S REALLY GOOD..

I DIDN'T SAY IT BECAUSE... WELL...

SORRY, IT'S JUST THAT WE'VE NEVER REALLY..

WE USUALLY JUST PLAY AGAINST EACH OTHER..

YOU'RE JUST BEGINNERS...

ON THE OTHER HAND, YOU TWO..

I SEE THAT YOU WERE DOING SOMETHING BESIDES GETTING A TAN THIS SUMMER! REGARDING THE NEW TEAM MEMBERS..

ONE HOUR LATER...

SWISH!

DRIBBLE

DRIBBLE

DRIBBLE

SWAP

SWISH

DRIBBLE

DRIBBLE

COME ON OVER

LOOKS LIKE OUR VETERANS HAVE BEEN PRACTICING..

GIRLS! LET'S HUDDLE UP!

I WAS JUST GETTING TO THAT, THUNDER...

!

I WANTED TO BE HERE TO COACH AT THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR...

IT'S JUST THAT...

I TOLD MYSELF THAT I CAN COUNT ON YOU TO GET THE TEAM IN SHAPE.

FOR THE NEXT MONTH, SINCE YOU WERE ALWAYS MY NUMBER TWO LAST YEAR..

WAIT! SO WHO'S GOING TO BE THE CAPTAIN AND WHO'S GOING TO RUN PRACTICES IF YOU'RE NOT HERE?!

I THOUGHT I COULD STILL COACH YOU, BUT I'M GOING TO HAVE PHYSICAL THERAPY A FEW TIMES A WEEK, SO IT DOESN'T HAPPEN AGAIN..

THE WHOLE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER..

UNFORTUNATELY, I HURT MYSELF JUST BEFORE SCHOOL STARTED, AND I'M GOING TO NEED AN OPERATION..

GWYN... DO YOU WANT TO HELP THUNDER RUN THE TEAM?

HUH?

GWYN TORM..

I'LL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE TEAM WHILE YOU'RE OUT..

OF COURSE YOU CAN COUNT ON ME!

FISH

YOU HAVE A LOT OF POTENTIAL, AND I'M SURE THAT YOU'LL BE A REAL ASSET TO THE TEAM AS CO-CAPTAIN FOR A FEW WEEKS.

BUT FROM WHAT I'VE SEEN.

THIS MUST BE PRETTY UNEXPECTED..

SQUEAK

BUT I ALSO THOUGHT IT WOULD BE GOOD IF YOU HAD A NUMBER TWO...

HUH?

I...

SO, WHAT DO YOU SAY?

WHO. WERE YOU THINKING ABOUT?

WHOOSH

UH... COOL...

REALLY?! THAT'S GREAT!

I'M SO HAPPY TO WELCOME YOU TO THE TEAM, GWYN!

AH, THANKS!

OF COURSE YOU CAN COUNT ON ME!

AH?

I CAN RUN THE TEAM PERFECTLY WELL ON MY OWN!

WAIT, ZOA! WHY SHOULD SHE BE CO-CAPTAIN?

PAC

GWYN.

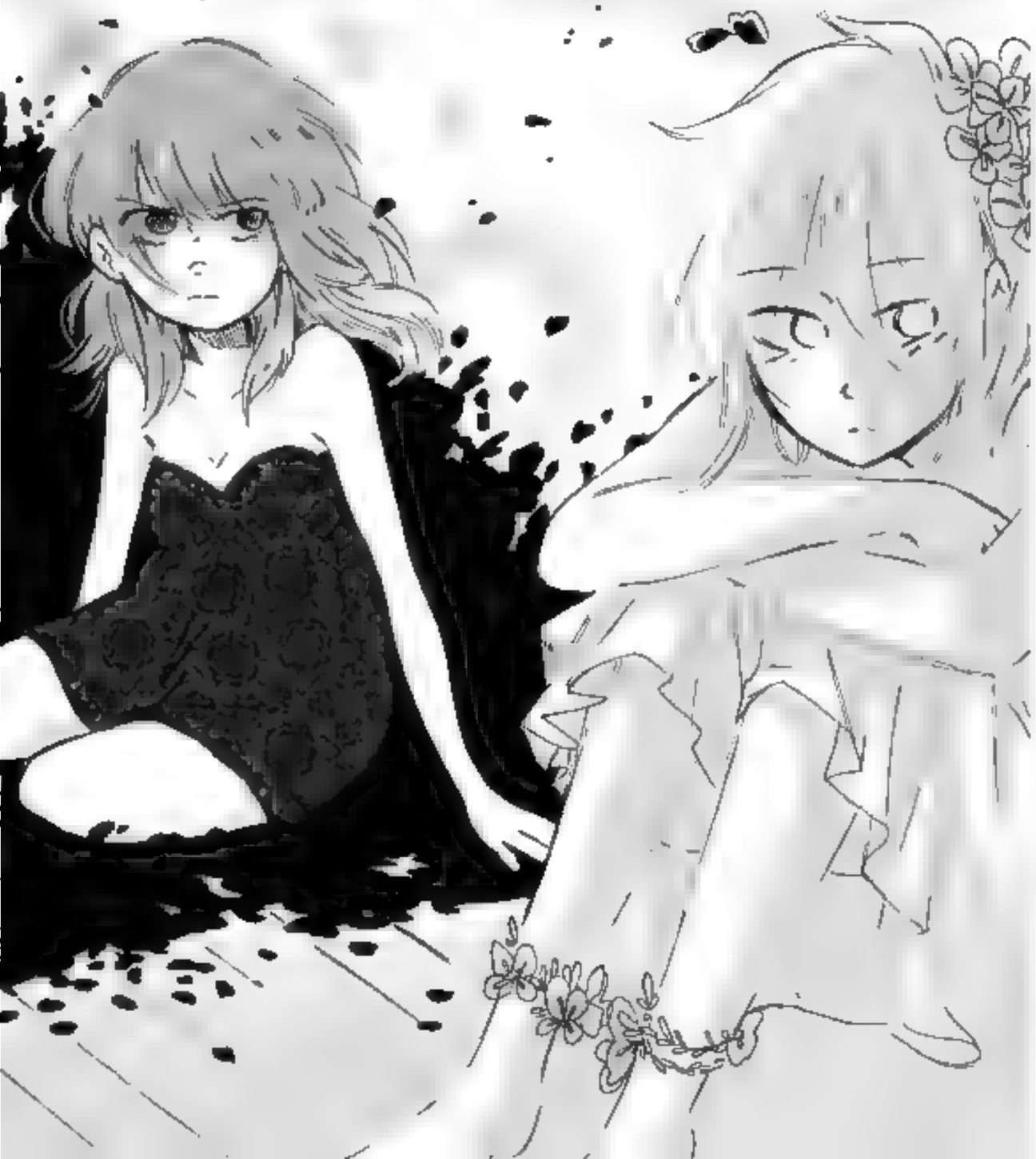
I KNOW YOU COULD, BUT IT SHOULDN'T COME AT THE EXPENSE OF YOUR STUDIES, AND IF THERE ARE TWO OF YOU, YOU CAN DIVIDE THE WORK...

SO, GWYN TORM?

SHUSH

AH! SURE!

Chapter 14
Redundant



IT WILL BE THE PERFECT CHANCE TO GET TO KNOW EVERYONE SINCE YOU'LL BE COACHING AND GUIDING THEM!

GWYN! THAT'S GREAT!

I COULDN'T BELIEVE IT EITHER.

YES..

REALLY?!

CO-CAPTAIN?!

OH, GWYN, I'M SO HAPPY FOR YOU!

HEE HEE

FLOSH

KNOCK KNOCK

OOOH..

SORRY. HOPE I'M NOT INTERRUPTING ANYTHING? DO YOU WANT SOMETHING TO DRINK? MAYBE SOMETHING TO EAT?

HI, GWYN!

WHAT?!

HI, MRS. TAKAHASHI..

HEY! STOP IGNORING ME!

OH. IT'S A FLOWER..

PRACTICE YES, BUT THE CAPTAIN NEEDS TO GET THE GYM AND THE DAY'S PROGRAM READY!

DOESN'T PRACTICE START AT 9?

YPEESH, THIS IS STARTING OFF GREAT..

AND I'M NOT EVEN LATE..?

YOU'RE LATE...!

SORRY I'LL GET CHANGED QUICKLY AND I'LL HELP YOU. I PROMISE TO GET HERE EARLY NEXT TIME.

ONYWAN! HU

FINE I COULDN'T CARE LESS.

FLIP

IT'S NOT LIKE I WAS COUNTING ON YOU ANYWAY!

OF COURSE IT WILL! I'LL BE THINKING GOOD THOUGHTS THE WHOLE TIME!

I REALLY HOPE IT GOES WELL..

YEAH...

SO TOMORROW'S YOUR FIRST DAY AS CO-CAPTAIN?

THANK YOU.

CREAK...

THE NEXT FEW WEEKS WILL BE DEVOTED TO THE BASICS.

OKAY. SINCE ABOUT HALF THE TEAM ARE BEGINNERS..

SO WHAT ARE WE STARTING WITH TODAY?

SUPER NERD

...

WHAT A BITCH! WHO DOES SHE THINK SHE IS, TALKING TO YOU LIKE THAT?!

TOSHUA! WATCH YOUR LANGUAGE!

WELL, SHE WAS PRETTY RUDE..

EVEN IF SHE HAD GOOD REASON TO SAY IT SHE SHOULDN'T HAVE SAID IT LIKE THAT!

GWYNNNN! YOU'RE TOO NICE!

BUT SHE'S RIGHT.. IF I DON'T PUT IN THE EFFORT, I DON'T DESERVE TO BE CO-CAPTAIN!

WE COULD START WITH A LITTLE GAME?

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

YEAH!

YOUR BALL HAS A MIND OF ITS OWN? YOU WANT A DIFFERENT ONE?

HOP

SLAP

WHOOOAAAA!

NOOO! WAIT FOR ME, COME BACK HERE BALL!

AAAAH...

ROLL

ROLL

WE LEARNED THE RULES AND THE BASICS WITH LITTLE GAMES...

ON MY OLD TEAM...

DIDN'T YOU HEAR WHAT I JUST SAID? WE'RE HERE TO WORK ON THE BASICS.

A GAME?!

RIGHT, BUT THIS ISN'T YOUR OLD TEAM! SO WE START WITH FOCUSED DRILLS!

HEY! DON'T SAY THAT... NOBODY WAS BORN KNOWING HOW TO PLAY!

HUFF...

PUFF...

THAT'S NICE, BUT I KNOW IT'S NOT THE BALL... I JUST SUCK...

YOU SAW THIS SUMMER THAT I CAN'T PLAY

YOU SHOULD PUSH YOUR HIPS BACK TO REDUCE THE DISTANCE BETWEEN THE BALL AND THE COURT.

OKP

WAIT!

I ALREADY NOTICED THAT YOU AREN'T STANDING RIGHT...

1F

BOUNCE

BOUNCE

OH, SORRY! I WAS FOCUSED ON THIS PROBLEM WITH MY STUPID COMPUTER. WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?

EXCUSE ME. I NEED SOME INFORMATION!

AHEM...

AND I'M MISSING SOME INFORMATION ON GWYN TORM, THE CO-CAPTAIN. ABOUT HER OLD SCHOOL.

RIGHT I'M THE TEMPORARY CAPTAIN OF THE BASKETBALL TEAM.

I'M STEPPING IN FOR ZOA LUPIA.

HERE YOU GO. IF YOU NEED ANYTHING ELSE...

NO, THAT'S FINE THANK YOU VERY MUCH. I'M SURE I'LL FIND WHAT I NEED!

YOU MUST NEED HER DATA SHEET FROM HER PREVIOUS SCHOOL. I'LL PRINT THAT OUT. GIVE ME A SECOND!

...

OH, I SEE! ANOTHER PROBLEM WITH ONE OF THE SPORTS TEAMS...

GET GOOD AT IT WITH YOUR DOMINANT HAND AND THEN LATER YOU CAN LEARN TO DRIBBLE WITH BOTH HANDS...

DRIBBLE LOW TO KEEP FROM LOSING IT.

SLAP

SLAP

SHOVE

ALWAYS KEEP YOUR HEAD UP!

YOU NEED TO BE ABLE TO SEE WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND YOU! DON'T FOCUS ON THE BALL, JUST FEEL IT.

DRIBBLE

DRIBBLE

IT'S LIKE I'M SEEING MYSELF WITH ZOA WHEN I WAS A FRESHMAN.

THAT NEW GWYN IS PRETTY GOOD AT COACHING THE BEGINNERS...

HI EXCUSE ME?

DAMN COMPUTER

THE NEXT DAY

WHOA!

SHOOSH

SCREECH

SLAP

BOUNCE

SHE WAS AT HARU HIGH?

BUT..

THEY DON'T HAVE A GIRLS' TEAM AT HARU!

HMM...

SWIM, CAN YOU SHOW ME THAT THING FROM THE LAST TIME AGAIN?

SURE, BE RIGHT OVER!

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT HAVING A LITTLE GAME?..

GOOD..

WE'RE ALMOST THROUGH FOR TODAY, BUT SINCE SOME OF YOU WANTED TO "PLAY" YESTERDAY...

EEEE!

SWISH!

AAH!

DRIBBLE

DRIBBLE

AH!

HEY! YOU JUST WANT TO BE ON HER TEAM SO YOU DON'T LOSE!

CAN I BE ON THE TEAM TOO?

GWYN! WILL YOU BE ON MY TEAM?

SURE THAT'S ABOUT RIGHT

HA HA

GRR...

DASH

SWEE

WAH!

SLAP

NEXT TIME, I'M GOING TO BE ON YOUR TEAM! YOU RULE!

YEAH, GWYN! NOTHIN' BUT NET!

HEE HEE

RUFFLE

RUFFLE

HUH?

HUH?

PAT

GRAB

AH!

IT'S A TEAM WITH PLAYERS AT ALL LEVELS..

USUALLY BAD UNLESS THEY HAVE THE MONEY TO GET EXTRA COACHING!

IT DEPENDS, BUT IT'S USUALLY PEOPLE WHO JUST PLAY FOR FUN.

NO. I I PLAYED ON A NEIGHBORHOOD TEAM..

AND I GOT SOME EXTRA COACHING OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL..

IT'S CRAZY HOW WELL YOU PLAY WITH ONLY A LITTLE EXTRA COACHING!

A NEIGH-BORHOOD TEAM?

WHAT'S A "NEIGH-BORHOOD TEAM"?

HUH?

UH... I

I ON MY OLD TEAM...

HOW DID YOU LEARN TO PLAY LIKE THAT?

YOU'RE REALLY GREAT

GWYN...

?

BUT WEREN'T YOU AT HAWK HIGH?

AND...

MY UNDERSTANDING IS THAT THEY ONLY HAVE A BOYS' TEAM THERE.

NOT ON THE HIGH SCHOOL TEAM..?

LIAR. SHE'S JUST TRYING TO HIDE HER SECRET.

HER SECRET...

HMM...

TO REMOVE AN EXTRA GWYN FROM MY TEAM!

THIS IS JUST THE THING I NEED...

WHY REGISTER AT A DIFFERENT SCHOOL IN YOUR SENIOR YEAR?

SHE REALLY SEEMED UNCOMFORTABLE WHEN I BROUGHT UP HER OLD SCHOOL..

THERE MUST BE SOMETHING SHE'S..

AH?!

Chapter 15
Falling Into
the Trap

SO HOW'S BASKETBALL GOING?

PRETTY WELL. THE GIRLS ARE NICE. IT'S JUST THE OTHER GWYN, THUNDER, THAT I'M NOT GETTING ALONG WITH

THAT SUCKS! YOU HAVE TO LEARN TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO COMMUNICATE IF YOU'RE GOING TO WORK TOGETHER...

I KNOW, BUT SHE ALMOST NEVER TALKS TO ME SHE SENDS TRAINING SCHEDULES TO EVERYONE WITHOUT EVEN SHOWING THEM TO ME FIRST

AND THEN SHE DOESN'T EVEN SEND THEM TO ME..

SHE ONLY TALKS TO ME TO CONTRADICT ME OR GET ON MY CASE FOR SOMETHING..

AND ALSO...

HEE HEE HEE

YOU- YOU KISSED ME TO SHUT ME UP! THAT'S MESSED UP!

SOMETIMES, I THINK SHE DOES IT ON PURPOSE

FOR EXAMPLE, DURING PRACTICE, WHEN I SUGGEST DRILLS OR ACTIVITIES FOR THE FIRST YEARS..

SHE GOES BEHIND MY BACK TO TELL THEM TO DO OTHER THINGS THAT ARE OFTEN THE COMPLETE OPPOSITE OF WHAT I TOLD THEM TO DO.

N-NO!

WELL, MAYBE A LITTLE...

I DON'T KNOW. I JUST CAN'T FIGURE HER OUT

SHE'S A PAIN IN THE ASS..

YEAH..

OF COURSE SHE'S DOING IT ON PURPOSE!

IN ANY CASE..

YOU SHOULD KEEP AN EYE ON HER SO SHE DOESN'T PULL SOMETHING NASTY WHILE YOUR BACK'S TURNED.

I WOULD STILL LOVE YOU IF YOU OCCASIONALLY SAID THAT PEOPLE WERE PAINS IN THE ASS, SO SAY IT!

WHOA!

GRAB

GWYN!!

I DON'T KNOW HER WELL ENOUGH YET TO SAY THAT..

GWYN, YOU CAN SAY IT. JUST SAY "SHE'S A PAIN IN THE ASS!"

IT'LL BE GOOD FOR YOU.

AH...

HUH?

WHAT DO YOU MEAN "STRANGELY"?

WITHOUT HAVING TO MAKE SURE I'M NOT SEEN

STILL, IT'S NICE TO BE ABLE TO CHANGE IN PEACE...

EVEN IF THAT MEANT I COULD BE WITH AZAN!

HUH?

HEE HEE - HI GWYN!

RUSTLE

SLAM

PHIP

...?

MMM?

WHEN WE'RE CHANGING...

WHISPER

IF I WERE YOU, I'D KEEP AN EYE OUT I ALREADY SAW GWYN LOOKING AT US STRANGELY .

HM?

CLANG

GWYN'S SO COOL WHEN SHE'S ON THE COURT!

SH-SHE WAS ALREADY ON A GIRLS' TEAM!

AND WHY WOULD SHE? SHE'S ALREADY GOT A GIR—

OH. I WHOOPS!

INGRID, I DON'T KNOW WHERE YOU GOT THAT IDEA, BUT I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT GWYN IS SOMEONE WHO WOULD CHECK OUT GIRLS IN THE LOCKER ROOM.

TELL ME..

HAVE YOU EVER NOTICED GWYN CHECKING OUT THE OTHER GIRLS IN THE LOCKER ROOM?

OHH.. ARE YOU SURE IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH IT?

WHAT?! SHE'S A LESBIAN?! REALLY?! BUT, THEN...

OH, NO.

SHE LIKES GIRLS! SO WHAT?!

AH BUT THAT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THE FACT THAT..

AND WE THINK HER CHANGING SCHOOLS IS STRANGE...

AND THIS WHOLE STORY ABOUT THE NEIGHBORHOOD TEAM.

MUMP!

WE WERE JUST TALKING ABOUT GWYN TORN, I MEAN SHE'S CHECKING US OUT IN THE LOCKER ROOM.

BAH..

SHE DIDN'T SEEM TOO COMFORTABLE TALKING ABOUT ALL THAT...

HER WHOLE "NEIGHBORHOOD CLUB" STORY DIDN'T MAKE MUCH SENSE, AND THE EXTRA COACHING SESSIONS...

OH, REALLY?

AH!

IKS!

UH, IT'S ..

THAT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH IT?! THE FACT THAT SHE'S A LESBIAN IS WHY SHE'S BEEN CHECKING US OUT IN THE LOCKER ROOM!

INGRID!

THAT EXPLAINS NOTHING AT ALL...

REALLY?! IF SHE LIKED KOTA THERE WOULD BE LESS OF A CHANCE THAT SHE--

WHAT?!

IT'S ALL TRUE!

THEN WHY DID SHE CHANGE SCHOOLS IN HER SENIOR YEAR EVEN THOUGH HER FAMILY DIDN'T MOVE?

SOMETHING WRONG?

GIRLS? WHAT ARE YOU UP TO?

OH, UH, THAT ..

EHHH?

SORRY TO INTERRUPT YOUR LITTLE DISCUSSION ABOUT ME, BUT

IF YOU HAVE ANY COMPLAINTS ABOUT ME OR ANYTHING TO ASK ME, PLEASE TELL ME TO MY FACE!

AND IF IT'S ABOUT MY PERSONAL LIFE, I DON'T THINK THAT'S ANY OF YOUR BUSINESS!

NO... SORRY!

NO...

SO, DID YOU WANT TO TELL ME SOMETHING?

NOW THAT I'VE SOWN THE SEEDS OF DOUBT... IT'S TIME FOR THE FINAL BLOW...

VRRRR...

SO..

YES, EXACTLY ..

YOU SENT ME A TEXT .. YOU WANTED TO TALK TO ME IN PRIVATE? ..

I THINK WE GOT OFF ON THE WRONG FOOT AND I WANTED TO MAKE IT RIGHT WITH YOU..

cloackroom

OR MAYBE IT'S EXACTLY THE RIGHT TIME!

I DON'T THINK THIS IS THE BEST TIME, CONSIDERING WHAT JUST HAPPENED..

IF I HAD TAKEN THE TIME TO GET TO KNOW YOU INSTEAD OF TRYING TO GO IT ALONE . I COULD HAVE KEPT THE DISCUSSION FROM GOING OFF THE RAILS..

DOES ANYONE KNOW WHERE THE TWO GWYNS ARE?

I SAW GWYN GO INTO THE LOCKER ROOM...

NOW!

WHOOSH

THANKS, THUNDER..

I WANT US TO START OVER, YOU AND ME...

GREAT! GIVE ME YOUR PHONE SO I CAN PUT MY NUMBER IN!

UM.. SURE, OKAY!

YOU CAN CALL ME ANY TIME! AND I'M ADDING MYSELF ON TWEETER!

CLICK CLICK CLICK CLICK

AH THANKS

YOU WANT TO?

GWYN...

POP!

I'M ALL DONE...

HERE!

WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU, GWYN?! WHY DID YOU JUST KISS ME?!

WERE YOU SERIOUSLY JUST TRYING TO MAKE OUT WITH ME?!

I..

THUNDER, IS EVERY-THING OKAY?

GWYN?

GWYN, YOU KISSED THUNDER?!

GWYN?!

N-NO, I.. IT'S.. IT'S NOT WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE! SHE GRABBED–

!!!

NO! STOP!

BAM!

OUCH!

?!

NNNGH!

SHOVE

SHE MUST HAVE ERASED IT WHEN SHE TOOK MY PHONE?! BUT WHY KISS ME AND THEN PRETEND THAT.

IT'S NOT THERE ANYMORE..!

HANA

SMS

Akemi

Nova

hier

Dad

M.

THAT IT WAS ALL MY FAULT...

AND EVERYONE BELIEVES *HER!*

GWYN! WHAT'S ALL THIS?

I JUST WENT TO THE LOCKER ROOM TO LOOK FOR MY WATER BOTTLE!

CALM DOWN. WHAT HAPPENED?

WHAT'S GOING ON?

-SNIFF

AND SHE FOLLOWED ME..

AH! THUNDER?!

AH!

IT'S..

NO..

CLICK CLICK

GWYN! SAY SOMETHING..

WHAT DID YOU DO THAT FOR?

SHE SENT ME A TEXT AND I...

Chapter 16
Side

WHAT'S THE "X WHATEVER CON?" HMMM... I'M NOT SURE I WANT TO KNOW.

OOOH! DID YOU SEE? HE YXY CON IS IN DECEMBER THIS YEAR!

OF COURSE! I ALREADY PUT IT IN MY CALENDAR!

HEH HEH HEH

N-NO, IT'S NOT HIM AT ALL! WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?! OKAY, BYE, GOTTA GO!!

WHAT'S SHE DOING HERE?!

TAP

TAP

WAAAAH

WHAT?! IT IS GWYN!

THAT'S NOT GWYN, IS IT? HE CAME LOOKING FOR YOU?

WAIT!

!

I FOUND THIS LITTLE CAFE BY ACCIDENT WHEN I WAS WANDERING AROUND AFTER CLASS WITH SOME FRIENDS. THIS STREET IS REALLY QUIET, AND IT'S ABOUT HALFWAY BETWEEN OUR SCHOOLS!

IT'S GREAT, ISN'T IT? DO YOU LIKE IT?

YEAH. IT'S GREAT

AAAAH!!

OKAY, TELL ME WHAT'S BOTHERING YOU SO MUCH THIS INSTANT!!!

I WAS JUST TRYING TO LOOSEN UP THE ATMOSPHERE IN HERE!

IT'S THUNDER AGAIN.

WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU?

IT'S...

HUH?!

OOPS

HUH?! DON'T YOU KNOW THE KIND OF TROUBLE YOU COULD GET IN, COMING HERE?!

BURROW

AH!

DO YOU WANT THE WHOLE SCHOOL TO SEE YOU DRESSED LIKE A GIRL OR WHAT?!

WHAT ON EARTH ARE YOU DOING HERE?!

GRAB

I... IT WAS JUST AUTOMATIC. I HAVE A LOT ON MY MIND...

LET'S GO SOMEPLACE WHERE NO ONE WILL RECOGNIZE YOU.

WELL, IF YOU DON'T WANT TO HAVE EVEN MORE TO WORRY ABOUT

YES. I KNOW...

IT'S JUST THAT I'M WORRIED ABOUT YOUR SITUATION... YOU CAN'T LET THIS GIRL HAVE THE LAST WORD.

FORGIVE ME. I DIDN'T MEAN TO SHOUT AT YOU..

I WAS JUST SO SHOCKED. I LEFT WITHOUT SAYING ANYTHING. I PROBABLY DIDN'T DO MY CASE ANY GOOD..

WHO DOES THAT LITTLE SEWER RAT THINK SHE IS? SHE DARED TO TOUCH MY GWYN AND THEN TRIED TO FRAME YOU! IF SHE HAD A HEART, I'D TEAR IT OUT RIGHT NOW. BUT SINCE S[illegible]T—

WHAAATTT?! WHAT DO YOU MEAN, SHE KISSED YOU?! SHE HAD NO RIGHT!! AND ON TOP OF IT, SHE ACCUSED YOU OF IT?!

IF I ONLY KNEW WHY SHE DID IT, I COULD TRY TO EXPLAIN MYSELF TO HER—

?!

SHHH...

OH SORRY

EXPLAIN YOURSELF?! *EXPLAIN YOURSELF?!!* WHO GIVES A DAMN WHY SHE DID IT?! SHE DID IT, AND THAT'S ALL THAT MATTERS! HOW DO YOU STILL THINK YOU CAN FIX THAT BY TALKING? SHE—

I JUST HATE TO SEE YOU SO MESSED UP BECAUSE OF HER..

AH...

WE NEVER REALLY THOUGHT ABOUT WHETHER IT WOULD BE A PROBLEM IF WE KISSED OR HELD HANDS IN PUBLIC...

NO... GWYN, IT'S—

SORRY! I DON'T KNOW WHAT CAME OVER ME

THAT WOMAN WAS LOOKING AT US AND..

YOU'VE NEVER FELT UNCOMFORTABLE BEFORE WHEN WE PEOPLE SAW US TOGETHER.

I KNOW! DON'T APOLOGIZE!

NO! I'M SORRY. IT'S JUST THAT I'M IN A REALLY DARK MOOD ...

YES...

DON'T WORRY

YOU'RE SURE YOU WANT TO WORK THIS OUT ALL ON YOUR OWN?

YOU GOING TO BE OKAY?

GWYN.

THAT'S NOT—

YOU WANTED TO "JUST TALK TO HER" YESTERDAY AND THEN YOU ATTACKED HER!

REALLY?

I JUST WANT TO TALK TO HER...

YOU'RE DREAMING, SWEETIE! WE'RE NOT GOING TO LEAVE YOU ALONE WITH THUNDER.

I CAN'T BELIEVE SHE SHOWED UP.

..

HI...

IT'S RIDICULOUS TO TRY TO DENY IT!

WE ALL SAW YOU FORCE YOURSELF ON HER!

I JUST CAME BY TO TALK TO THUNDER...

ALONE..

BUT THAT'S NOT WHAT—

GWYN! STOP LYING TO THEM.

WHAT THE HELL?!

IF YOU APOLOGIZE AND RESIGN AS CO-CAPTAIN, THEN I'M WILLING TO FORGET ABOUT EVERYTHING AND YOU CAN STAY ON THE TEAM... IF THE TEAM STILL WANTS YOU!

OH!

YOU FOLLOWED ME INTO THE LOCKER ROOM AND TOLD ME THAT THE REASON I'M DISTANT WITH YOU IS BECAUSE I'M ATTRACTED TO YOU AND THEN YOU SUDDENLY KISSED ME...

WHAT? THAT'S WHAT YOU TOLD THEM?!

THUNDER.

YOU'RE TOO NICE.

INGRID! LET GWYN GO THIS INSTANT!

HEY! IF YOU WANT TO GET TO THUNDER, YOU'LL HAVE TO MAKE IT THROUGH ME FIRST!

O'RE E ONE WHO SHOULD—

NOW YOU'VE GONE TOO FAR!

WE ARRIVED IN THE MIDDLE OF A STORM...

OH, NO.

THAT'S RIDICULOUS!!

WHY ARE YOU DOING ALL THIS?

IT WOULD REALLY BE SAD IF CHANGING SCHOOLS WAS ALL FOR NOTHING AND I HAVE TO TELL PEOPLE YOUR *LITTLE SECRET*...

DON'T LET TOSHUA DEFEND YOU. IT WILL ONLY MAKE THINGS WORSE..

AHP

NO! SHE KNOWS...?

UH. TOSHUA, YOU SHOULDN'T GET INVOLVED.

I SAID.

LET HER GO IMMEDIATELY!

I SAW THUNDER CRYING, BUT GWYN WAS JUST AS UPSET!

EXPLAIN WHAT? YOU WERE THERE TOO! YOU SAW..

YOU NEVER GAVE HER A CHANCE TO EXPLAIN HERSELF CLEARLY!

I'M JUST SAYING THAT

AND IF I DON'T, WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT? COME TO HER DEFENSE?

WHY'S THIS ANY OF YOUR BUSINESS?

IF THAT'S WHAT YOU WANT THUNDER.

I'LL APOLOGIZE TO THE TEAM. I'LL RESIGN AS CO-CAPTAIN.. BUT I'M STAYING ON THE TEAM.

AAH!

IF YOU'RE SUPPORTING HER, THAT MEANS THAT YOU THINK WHAT SHE DID IS ACCEPTABLE!

OF COURSE I DON'T THINK THAT.

IF I WAS EVER IN HER SITUATION! SO..

IT'S MY BUSINESS BECAUSE GWYN WOULD HAVE COME TO MY DEFENSE.

RUFFLE

RUFFLE

HMPH!

CALL IT A BROTHER'S SIXTH SENSE!

HMM...

IF YOU DIDN'T LOOK, HOW DID YOU KNOW?

KNOCK

KNOCK

I'M SLEEPING HERE TONIGHT, AND YOU KNOW WHERE MY ROOM IS. OKAY?

AND IF YOU NEED ADVICE ON ANYTHING..

HEH...

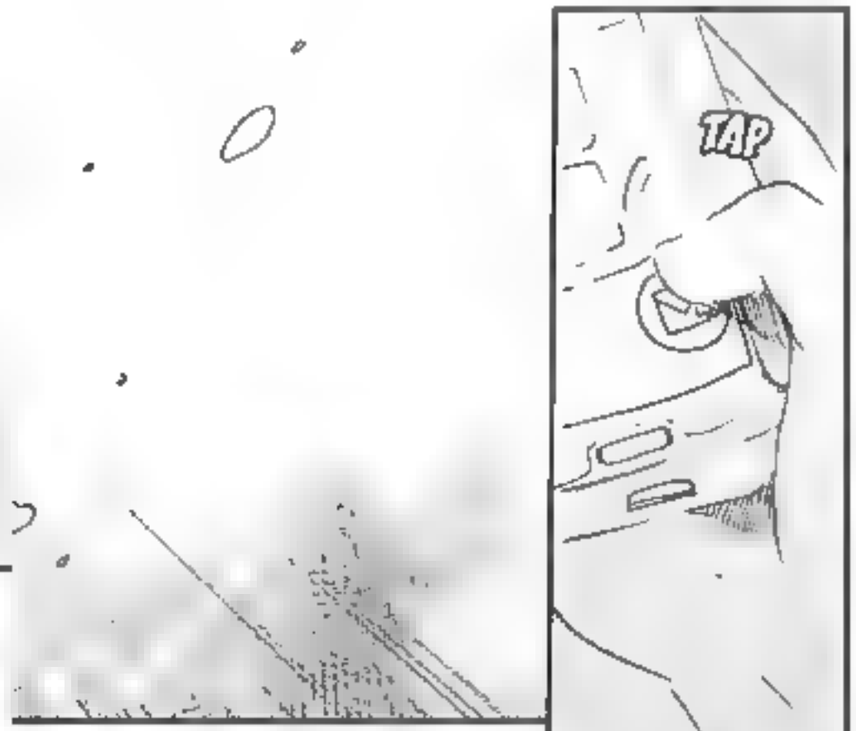
HEY, SIS!

YOU LEFT YOUR PHONE DOWNSTAIRS AND IT WON'T STOP RINGING I DIDN'T LOOK, BUT I THINK IT'S AZAMI.

OH! THANKS...

PFFHH CALM DOWN.
WHAAAT?! THAT WITCH THREATENED TO EXPOSE GWYN'S SECRET AND MADE HER RESIGN AS CO-CAPTAIN?!
I DIDN'T THINK IT WOULD GO THIS FAR
BUT IF I WANT TO FREE GWYN FROM THIS MONSTER, I HAVE NO CHOICE..
KLAK-A-CHAK CHAK!

SO?
DID YOU TALK TO GWYN?
?


TAP

TIP TAP

Chapter 17
Intervention

HAH...
HEH
MWAHAHA!
OWWW!
SMACK
WHOOSH
CLANG
NEXT!
TAP
TAP

I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING, AND YOU KNOW IT..

LET'S GO, GIRLS. BACK TO WORK!

BUT YOU'RE NOT THE CO-CAPTAIN, SO LEAVE ME ALONE!!

I... I COULD MAYBE SHOW YOU AGAIN HOW TO..

ENOUGH! WE KNOW YOU KNOW HOW TO DO IT!

...?

INGRID, ARE YOU OKAY? YOU DIDN'T HURT YOURSELF TOO BADLY?

GWYN.. !! I'M ALMOST THERE... I'M COMING TO SAVE YOU!

YOU SHOULD PROBABLY JUST STAY ON THE SIDELINES..

AFTER WHAT YOU DID, THEY AREN'T GOING TO LISTEN TO YOU.

UNTIL ZOA GETS BACK..

THE ENEMY OF YOUR ENEMY IS YOUR ALLY.. AT LEAST FOR TODAY

I DIDN'T BEG YOU! I JUST..

SHUT IT!

WHAT IF WE SCREW UP AND IT JUST MAKES EVERYTHING WORSE...?

AND GWYN GETS PERMANENTLY KICKED OFF THE TEAM? HER TEAMMATES WILL TOTALLY LOSE FAITH IN HER AND—

YOU'RE SURE THIS IS GOING TO WORK?

HSSSS!

NOPE! I DON'T TRUST YOU ONE BIT!

AZAMI, DO YOU TRUST ME OR NOT?

WE'RE DOING IT JUST LIKE WE SAID...

AND I PROMISE YOU, THIS GIRL IS GOING TO REGRET GOING AFTER GWYN!

SHEESH. I CAN'T BELIEVE IT. SHE'S STUBBORN AS A MULE, THIS ONE. I

THEN WHY DID YOU BEG ME TO HELP YOU?

AZAMI, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

MY NAME IS AZAMI TAKAHASHI! I CAME HERE...

YOUR ATTENTION PLEASE!

Y-YOUR

TO DEFEND MY *GIRLFRIEND!*

GWYNDOLIN TORM!!

AH, SO THAT'S IT

OOH!

NOW THAT'S A DECLARATION OF LOVE!

AZAMI, WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE??

BLAM

?!

HMM?

AZAMI?

IT'S GWYN'S GIRLFRIEND! WHAT'S SHE DOING HERE?

HUFFF

BREATHE! I'M DOING THIS FOR GWYN, BUT I HATE BEING THE CENTER OF ATTENTION AND SPEAKING IN PUBLIC!

HMPH!

HUFF!

UMM...

WHY WOULD GWYN KISS A GIRL SHE HATES?!

BUT WHY WOULD THUNDER HAVE—?

NO ONE HERE KNOWS GWYN AS WELL AS I DO!

SHE'S A SWEET, LOYAL AND RESPECTABLE GIRL!

SHE WOULD HAVE NEVER DONE WHAT YOU ACCUSE HER OF DOING; JUST THINK ABOUT IT! SHE DID EVERYTHING SHE COULD TO FIT IN WITH THE TEAM, TO HELP YOU AND TRAIN YOU.

ACCUSED HER OF SOMETHING SHE DIDN'T DO! SOMETHING TERRIBLE SHE *NEVER* WOULD HAVE DONE!

THE ONE AMONGST YOU CALLED "GWYN THUNDER"...

I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU HAVE A HARD TIME BELIEVING THAT SHE COULD KISS ANOTHER GIRL, BUT WE ALL SAW HER—

EXCUSE ME "AZAMI", RIGHT? SINCE YOU'RE HER GIRLFRIEND...

HUH?!

THEN LISTEN TO ME WELL, MAUD! I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU SAW, BUT I KNOW THAT IT'S ALL PART OF A NASTY TRICK PERPETRATED BY THIS THUNDER GIRL!

UH, NO, I'M MAUD...

ARE YOU "GWYN THUNDER"?!

IS THAT TRUE?

OH

WHAT?

SHE'S ACTUALLY A VERY SKILLED LIAR. SHE EVEN MADE PEOPLE THINK SHE WAS A BOY...

FOR TWO YEARS AT HER OLD HIGH SCHOOL, AND IN FRONT OF HER WHOLE BASKETBALL TEAM!

THAT'S HER! THUNDER...

THOSE ARE BEAUTIFUL WORDS, AZAMI...

BUT LIKE YOU SAID, NO ONE HERE REALLY KNOWS GWYN...

WHEREAS I...

GRRRR

HA!

I CAN PROVE THAT SHE KNOWS VERY WELL HOW TO LIE...

!!

OH, NO! IT'S TRUE THAT SHE KNOWS ABOUT GWYN'S SECRET!

NO!

NO!

HAVE YOU RUN OUT OF THINGS TO SAY?

SO?

AM I WRONG?

THAT WAS HOW SHE SEDUCED YOU IN THE FIRST PLACE, WASN'T IT? WITH THAT LIE...

YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT IT..

TELL THEM WHAT? THAT I REALLY DID LIE FOR TWO YEARS TO KEEP MY FRIENDS? RIGHT OFF THE BAT, I DON'T THINK THAT'S GOING TO HELP MY CAUSE...

SAY SOMETHING!

EXPLAIN IT LIKE THE FIRST TIME YOU EXPLAINED IT TO ME!

AH?

LYING FOR *TWO YEARS!* THAT'S MORE THAN ENOUGH PROOF THAT SHE KNOWS HOW TO MANIPULATE PEOPLE.

HMM.

OH, NO..

AH!

AS A BOY?

GWYN!

SWIPE

JUUUDITH!! WHY DID YOU TELL ME TO SPEAK FRANKLY, FROM MY HEART?! IT ONLY MADE THINGS WORSE AND NOW THEY KNOW GWYN'S SECRET!!

AND, I SHOULD ADD IN PASSING, THAT IT'S NOT VERY DISCREET TO TAP AWAY ON YOUR CELL PHONE TO ERASE THE MESSAGE IN FRONT OF EVERYONE.

OOH . . NO USE ERASING IT! IT'S ALREADY TOO LATE. I'VE SENT A COPY TO EVERYONE HERE!

YOU SHOULD HAVE DONE IT JUST AFTER YOU SPRANG YOUR TRAP ON GWYN.. THAT'S WHAT I WOULD HAVE DONE!

HAPPILY FOR US, YOU WERE SO BLINDED BY JEALOUSY THAT YOU DIDN'T PAY ATTENTION TO THE DETAILS!

HEH HEH

OOOH.

THEN YOU ADMIT THAT THIS IS YOURS?

GIVE IT BACK RIGHT NOW!!

HEY! THAT'S MY CELL PHONE!

SHOOSH

WHAM! WHAM!

"PLEASE MEET ME IN THE LOCKER ROOM BEFORE THE END OF PRACTICE. I NEED TO SPEAK WITH YOU. THUNDER."

WHAT? WHERE'D SHE COME FROM?

HUH?

HSSSS...

AND THAT THE TEXT I JUST READ, THE ONE YOU SENT TO GWYN TO TRAP HER, IS THE SAME ONE YOU ERASED FROM HER PHONE WHEN YOU ENTERED YOUR NUMBER?

JUDIIITH -I'VE NEVER BEEN SO HAPPY TO SEE YOU AS I AM RIGHT NOW!-

JU-4 JUDITH?

YOU TRICKED US ALL FOR.. FOR WHAT EXACTLY?! DOES THAT MEAN.. *YOU'RE* THE ONE WHO KISSED GWYN?!

! HEH HEH

TSSS...

IMPOSSIBLE... I DON'T BELIEVE IT...

THUNDER?

IS THAT TRUE...?

TAP TAP

TAP

YOU CAME OUT OF NOWHERE AND EVERYBODY LOVED YOU RIGHT AWAY! THEY WERE BLOWN AWAY BY YOUR TALENT, BUT I...

I WORKED TIRELESSLY FOR TWO WHOLE YEARS TO SECURE MY SPOT ON THE TEAM! I DESERVE TO BE CAPTAIN!!

BECAUSE ZOA SHOULD HAVE TRUSTED *ME* TO RUN THE TEAM, NOT YOU!

AND DO YOU WANT TO KNOW WHY I DID IT?

YES! I'M THE ONE WHO KISSED HER! AND THEN I PUT ON THAT ACT SO YOU'D COME TO MY DEFENSE!

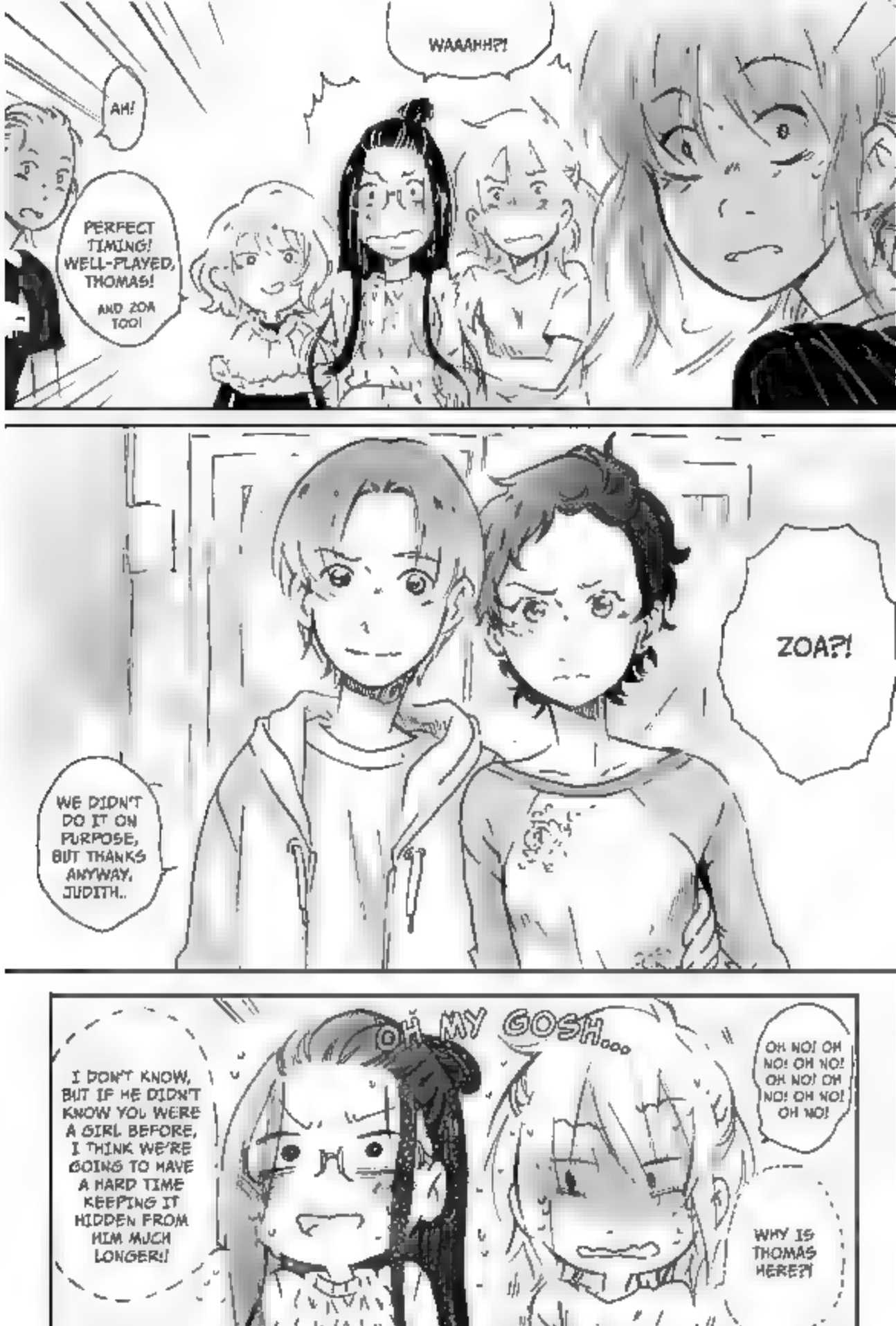
I'M ALSO THE ONE WHO TOLD INGRID THAT GWYN WAS CHECKING US OUT IN THE LOCKER ROOM EVEN THOUGH THAT WAS A TOTAL LIE!

AND ZOA TRUSTS YOU AS IF...

AS IF...

AND THEN YOU.. YOU SHOW UP JUST LIKE THAT, SCORE A FEW BASKETS..

AS IF I KNEW HER ALREADY?


WAAAHH?!
AH!
PERFECT TIMING! WELL-PLAYED, THOMAS!
AND ZOA TOO!
ZOA?!
WE DIDN'T DO IT ON PURPOSE, BUT THANKS ANYWAY, JUDITH..
I DON'T KNOW, BUT IF HE DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE A GIRL BEFORE, I THINK WE'RE GOING TO HAVE A HARD TIME KEEPING IT HIDDEN FROM HIM MUCH LONGER!
OH MY GOSH...
OH NO! OH NO! OH NO! OH NO! OH NO! OH NO! OH NO!
WHY IS THOMAS HERE?!

Chapter 18
Happy Ending

YOU HUMILIATED GWYN AND TURNED THE WHOLE TEAM AGAINST HER!

JUST TO MAKE PEOPLE THINK YOU WERE THE BEST!

KH...

THUNDER...

!!

YOU REALLY DISAPPOINT ME!

OH... UH..

I'M SORRY

GWYN..

...

HUH?

WAIT, ZOA!

GWYN THINKS THOMAS JUST DISCOVERED THAT SHE'S REALLY A GIRL.

THOMAS!

AND INSTEAD...

I THOUGHT YOU'D PUT THE TEAM BEFORE YOUR PERSONAL CONCERNS.

I KNOW ALL ABOUT YOUR SITUATION. THE NURSE TOLD ME AFTER YOU DECIDED TO CHANGE SCHOOLS...

GWYN!

YOU KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT EVERYBODY, DON'T YOU...?

YEP.

I DIDN'T WANT TO MAKE HER FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE... LIKE SHE SEEMS TO BE RIGHT NOW...

YOU NEVER TOLD HER?! EVEN AT HER GOING AWAY PARTY?

AND WHETHER YOU'RE A GIRL OR A BOY...

IT DOESN'T CHANGE ANYTHING BETWEEN US!

WE SPENT TWO GREAT YEARS ON THE SAME TEAM. THOSE ARE TIMES I'LL NEVER FORGET...

YOU'RE MY FRIEND!

NAME!...

AZAMI.

I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET ZOA!

THAT'S WHY SHE THOUGHT SHE COULD NEVER SEE YOU AGAIN WITHOUT GIVING AWAY HER SECRET!!

CAN YOU IMAGINE GOING ALL YOUR CHILDHOOD WITHOUT A FRIEND?!

ARE YOU REALLY THAT STUPID?!

OH?

BUT HAD TO LEAVE THE TEAM TO CO-CAPTAINS FOR HEALTH REASONS.

AND FOR THE LAST YEAR, SHE'S BEEN DATING THOMAS! THOUGH YOU KNOW HIM ALREADY, OF COURSE.

SHE'S THE CAPTAIN OF GWYN'S TEAM...

WE'RE TALKING ABOUT *THAT* GWYN?

THAT GWYN? GWYN WHO PLAYS BETTER THAN ALL THE BOYS? AND WHO'S SUCH A CUTIE-PIE IN ALL THE TEAM PHOTOS?!

A GIRL?!

WAAH...

BUT THAT'S NOTHING.

I CAN'T STAND TO SEE A GIRL CRY, ESPECIALLY IF IT'S ONE OF MY BEST FRIENDS!

AAH, GWYN!

YOU SEE?!

WHAAAA!

IS IT TRUE?

IT'S

WE CAN STILL BE FRIENDS?

SOB

SOB

THIS IS JUST THE REACTION I WANTED TO AVOID!

ALL ABOUT GWYN DRESSING AS A BOY AT HER OLD SCHOOL...?

IOA.

SO YOU KNEW?

SHE'S JUST EMOTIONAL...

BETWEEN THE PROBLEM WITH THUNDER AND THOMAS SHOWING UP, IT'S BEEN ONE HECK OF AN EMOTIONAL ROLLER COASTER TODAY...

TO KEEP IT ALL A SECRET..

YES..

THE NURSE AT THE HIGH SCHOOL DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING UNTIL AFTER HE... SHE DECIDED TO CHANGE SCHOOLS.

TO THE WHOLE SCHOOL? YOU KNOW THAT HIGH SCHOOL'S NOT ALL PUPPIES AND UNICORNS! IT'S HELL EVEN FOR MOST AVERAGE STUDENTS, BUT AFTER WHAT GWYN PULLED...

OH!

YEAH, YOU'RE RIGHT, BUT..

BUT WHY DIDN'T SHE JUST TELL EVERYBODY THE TRUTH?

YES. THOMAS TALKED TO ME ALL THE TIME ABOUT "HIM," AND WHEN HE LEARNED THE TRUTH...

SURE..

IN A WAY, YES..

IT WASN'T MY PLACE TO TELL YOU, ANYWAY

I COULDN'T TELL YOU ALL THAT I KNEW HER WITHOUT THE RISK OF EXPOSING HER SECRET..

I'LL TAKE CARE OF HER. SHE'LL FIT RIGHT IN ON MY TEAM, I PROMISE!

WE CAN'T LET A SUPERSTAR LIKE THAT GO JUST ANYWHERE!

HUH?

YOU'RE GOING TO DISCREETLY ADVISE HER TO GO TO MY HIGH SCHOOL!

1 DON'T 117

SO, I'M SORRY IF IT SEEMED LIKE I PLAYED FAVORITES WITH HER BECAUSE OF ALL THAT.

THEN I ASKED GWYN TO BE CAPTAIN BECAUSE I KNEW THAT BETWEEN HER EXPERIENCE ON THOMAS' TEAM AND HER TRAINING IN THE U.S. OVER THE SUMMER..

BUT..

I ONLY WANTED HER TO FIT IN WITH THE TEAM..

TO NOT FEEL LIKE AN OUTSIDER WHEN SHE GOT HERE.

SO I WANTED TO HELP HER..

SHE HAD A UNIQUE SET OF SKILLS THAT COULD REALLY HELP THE TEAM..

I NEVER WANTED TO DECEIVE YOU...

I...

I'M SORRY...

I.. I DIDN'T UNDER-STAND..

SMILE

HEH!

AND I ALREADY KNEW THAT SHE HAD A PARTICULAR SKILL SET AND EXPERIENCE TO BENEFIT EVERYBODY.

BUT YOU...

YOUR BITCHY SIDE?

I WENT WAY TOO FAR. I GOT CARRIED AWAY BY ..

NO...

GWYN.. IF.. IF YOU WANT ME TO QUIT THE TEAM..

...

I WOULD HAVE ASKED HER TO REPLACE ME. NOT THAT IT TURNED OUT ANY BETTER FOR YOU...

IF I HAD REALLY BEEN PLAYING FAVORITES...

MISS GWYNETH THUNDER!!!

ACK!!

YOU YOU'RE CLEARLY THE GLUE THAT HOLDS THIS TEAM TOGETHER!

BUT WE BOTH HAVE PLACES ON THE TEAM.

THEY HAD COMPLETE CONFIDENCE IN YOU.

THE PROOF IS THAT ALL THE GIRLS TOTALLY BELIEVED YOU..

THUNDER.. YOU DIDN'T CARE ABOUT MY LIFE OR MY SECRET OR THE FACT THAT I'M DATING A GIRL...

THEY WERE ALL EXCUSES TO GET ME OUT OF THE WAY!

GWYN?

NO. I UNDERSTAND NOW...

AND... HOW SHOULD I PUT THIS?

I'M A LITTLE RELIEVED THAT YOU DON'T HATE ME FOR WHAT I AM, BUT JUST..

BECAUSE YOU THOUGHT I WOULD TAKE YOUR PLACE ON THE TEAM..

WHICH MEANS YOU HURT THEM JUST AS MUCH AS YOU HURT ME.

NOW, I THINK YOU NEED TO REGAIN OUR TRUST BUT TO DO THAT, YOU NEED TO STAY ON THE TEAM.

WE NEED YOU ON THE TEAM!

EVEN IF THIS TIME YOU REALLY WENT TOO FAR.

OW OW OW...

BONK

YOU LITTLE...!

IF ALL THE OTHERS WANT ME TO QUIT THE TEAM..

BONK

WHAT THE--?

OF COURSE..

I THINK SOME OF US HERE (ME INCLUDED) ALSO OWE HER AN APOLOGY...

AND GWYN...

AH?

YOU'RE GOING TO SPEND THE NEXT FEW MONTHS WINNING BACK OUR TRUST AND APOLOGIZING!

BUT WE KNOW THAT YOU'RE NOT ALWAYS LIKE THAT...

WE JUST BLINDLY BELIEVED THUNDER..

EVEN THOUGH YOU SHOWED US FROM THE FIRST DAY OF PRACTICE.

THAT YOU ARE A GENUINE AND GENEROUS GIRL.

IT'S NOT HER FAULT! SHE DIDN'T REGISTER FOR THAT SCHOOL WITH THE INTENTION OF MAKING PEOPLE THINK SHE WAS A BOY! IT WAS ALL A MISUNDERSTANDING!!

SHE HAD NO CHOICE! SHE JUST WANTED TO BE ON A BASKETBALL TEAM!

AND SHE DIDN'T PICK ME UP! IT WAS LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT!

SOMEONE WHO LOVES BASKETBALL...

WHO NEVER HESITATED TO TAKE TIME TO HELP US GET BETTER...

AND TO SHARE HER PASSION FOR THE GAME WITH US.

Euh...

OH, REALLY? IT HAPPENS ALL THE TIME SOMEONE SIGNS UP FOR A TEAM AND IS MISTAKEN FOR THE OPPOSITE SEX! LIKE IF A BOY HAD SIGNED UP FOR OUR TEAM AND WE ALL THOUGHT HE WAS A GIRL..

BUT...

WE SHOULD HAVE HAD MORE CONFIDENCE IN YOU...

Fuu

TELL ME...

JUST TO BE CLEAR..

BLAH

BLAH

THAT SAID, IT'S SUPER COOL THAT YOU MADE EVERYONE THINK YOU WERE A BOY FOR TWO YEARS - YOU EVEN MANAGED TO PICK UP GIRLS!

AND LESS IN LOCKER ROOM GOSSIP.

ARE YOU JOKING?! IT WAS ON THE FORM I FILLED OUT THAT YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO READ BEFORE LETTING ME ON THE TEAM!

HAHA.. YEAH, I ADMIT THAT WE NEEDED NEW PLAYERS SO BADLY THAT I JUS ACCEPTED EVERYBODY W/ THOUT REALLY READING

BUT.. IF YOU'RE A BOY, WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME BEFORE? AND WHY DID YOU SIGN UP FOR THE GIRLS' TEAM?

YOU KNOW THERE ARE TWO TEAMS AT THIS SCHOOL...

WHY ARE YOU ASKING THEM THAT?

WUH?

SO THERE'S NO DOUBT YOU KNOW THAT TOSHUA'S A BOY, RIGHT?

I JUST WANTED TO BE ON THE SAME TEAM AS MY BEST FRIEND!

AND GWYN.

OHH.. THAT'S WHAT I WAS AFRAID OF.

HUHS?!

AND IN THE BEGINNING I ARRIVED EARLY AND WAS ALWAYS THE LAST ONE TO GO IN AFTER PRACTICE SO I WOULDN'T BOTHER ANYONE BUT SINCE NO ONE SAID ANYTHING, I SORT OF STOPPED PAYING ATTENTION...

B-BUT THERE WAS ONLY ONE LOCKER ROOM, SO I THOUGHT IT WAS UNISEX!

BUT...

YOU CHANGED WITH US IN THE LOCKER ROOM!!

HMMM..

TOSHUA... YOU'RE A BOY?!

WHAT?! YOU TOO? EVEN AFTER THIS SUMMER?

WHAT THE...?! WHAT DO YOU MEAN "HUH?!" NOBODY KNEW?

TOSHUA!

DON'T TRY TO CHANGE YOURSELF TO FIT INTO WHAT YOU THINK OTHER PEOPLE WANT YOU TO BE!

I'M SORRY. I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND...

SNIFF

SNIF

AND AS FOR ME...

I THINK YOU'RE SUPER JUST THE WAY! YOU ARE!

A-AW, REALLY? THANKS.

THOSE LITTLE DIFFERENCES MAKE YOU UNIQUE AND HELP YOU BETTER UNDERSTAND YOURSELF!

YOUR DETERMINATION TO DO THINGS OUTSIDE OF THE USUAL "RULES" TO STAY WITH YOUR BEST FRIEND, OR WEARING THE THINGS YOU WANT TO WEAR...

HAHA! NO, I DON'T THINK THEY'LL BE A MIRROR-IMAGE EPISODE

GLAD MARGARET CLEARED THAT UP OTHERWISE WE WOULD HAVE HAD THE OPPOSITE SITUATION ON OUR HANDS

HEE HEE

HEH

BUT THIS IS MY FRIENDSHIP NECKLACE WITH MARGARET

I CAN SEE THE MISUNDER-STANDING...

MOST OF MY FRIENDS ARE GIRLS AND I LIKE TO WEAR CUTE THINGS...

HEE HEE

THAT'S A GOOD IDEA...

HEH HEH HEH

WHEN ARE YOU GONNA STOP JERKING MY CHAIN?!

SO WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY SOMETHING TO HIM ABOUT HER?

NEVER...!

AGH!

SEE, I TOLD YOU IT WOULDN'T END UP BEING THE SAME STORY IN REVERSE...

WHICH GIVES YOU ONE MORE RIVAL FOR GWYN! THE LIST JUST KEEPS GETTING LONGER...

HNH!

FUAHHH

ANOTHER PROBLEM SOLVED, THANKS TO YOURS TRULY!

HEY! JEDITH!

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL!

AZAMI!

HMM?

PFFH!

SCREW THE RIVALS AND THE PROBLEMS - THEY DON'T SCARE ME! I KNOW THAT LOVE IS A BATTLEFIELD!

GOOD LUCK!

BUT--!!

OH, RIGHT, SORRY! EXCEPT FOR YOU, AZAMI...

CONSIDERING THAT YOU HAVE ONE MORE RIVAL!

WH-WHAT DO YOU THINK, GWYN?

AYE-AYE, CAP'N!

AH?

AND WE'LL MAKE A SCHEDULE FOR THE LOCKER ROOM THAT EVERYONE'S COMFORTABLE WITH.

IF IT'S ONLY FOR PRACTICES...

YOU CAN STAY ON THE TEAM!

REALLY?! THANK YOUU!

AH!

I LOVE YOU.

THANKS FOR BEING THERE FOR ME!

AZAMI...

The End

BREATH OF FLOWERS

A FAMILY RESEMBLANCE

MAGIC HAIR

And now we've reached the end of BREATH OF FLOWERS, my first published manga! It was a great first experience in the publishing world!

I hope to be able to publish other stories and continue to share adventures and emotions with all of you!♥

SPECIAL THANKS

- MY EDITORS, FOR EVERYTHING! (THE LIST WOULD BE TOO LONG...)
- MARION FOR HER ADVICE ON THE SCRIPT AND ROMANTIC ENTANGLEMENTS
- LUCILE FOR HER PIERCING LOOKS AND HER VALUABLE HELP WITH THE COVERS
- AYA WHO WAS ALWAYS AVAILABLE TO GIVE ME HER ADVICE ON THE DIALOGUE AND SCRIPTS
- KIRA FOR HER HELP WITH THE FRAMES (TEAM SHOJO FROM EDITIONS H2T)
- MY DEAR MOTHER FOR HER UNWAVERING SUPPORT!

AND YOU, THE READERS OF THIS MANGA! THANK YOU!

BREATH OF FLOWERS